

MSL

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Introduction

This booklet attempts to prove the existence of God using the reader's imagination and common sense. It is relatively short and concise. I could have written something long, that explained everything, but this is what I could do at this time. I believe that people can think for themselves, and that it is good practice to meditate on things in order to become more thoughtful. If you have trouble reading long books, but find it easier to think in your own mind, this booklet is perhaps well-suited for you.

The title of this booklet is *MSL* which is the name of the set of arguments given in this booklet for the existence of God. I will discuss the name more after presenting the arguments.

Knowledge and Belief

When we want to know whether God exists, we want to know the truth. We want to refine our thinking so that it reflects what is outside ourselves. So how do we go about coming to know?

First, we know by direct experience. Then, we criticize that direct experience by asking "How can we know X?". We try to imagine otherwise. If that imagination alters our direct perception, enables us to see what we were always seeing, it helped us see the truth. But, that imagination otherwise can cause us to not trust what we see, thus to not see what we actually see.

There are cases where our direct experience does not give us as much information as we would like for us to fulfill some kind of important purpose. We might like to have perfect knowledge before we respond to reality, but it is sometimes riskier to not respond at all than to extrapolate from what we know. So we can then form imaginations. We can then bet

that certain imaginations are valid. We respond to those imaginations, which are potential reality, by preferring, acting, and/or trusting a certain way.

This book (and, without having studied all philosophy, I would guess all philosophy) is not only theoretical, but connects you, or potentially connects you, to reality. This book is primarily intended to help you to see God with your own eyes, rather than inferring and betting that he exists.

Proof

You exist.

The starting place for philosophy is to perceive what is not you.

Look at the table next to you. You see a pile of objects. Now I point out the cup of water sitting on it, and you see it, but your eyes saw it before without seeing it. Philosophy points out what you are already seeing.

You see the objects on the table in an ordinary way that you don't have to doubt. They are part of your life, like your body is part of your life.

An argument happens to be invalid. You see that it is invalid, freshly, vividly, certainly, due to some flaw in it. You see it in the same way you see the cup of water on the table.

You don't see the argument with your eyes, hear it with your ears (although the sounds of its words can be spoken aloud), touch it with your skin, smell it with your nose, taste it with your mouth, your five senses. But you see it clearly, thus allowing you to clearly see its falsehood. You see it with your noetic sense, your ability to see the unseen world of ideas. You can also see the unseen world of images with your imaginal sense, or imagination. How do you know what is in the unseen world if you don't see it? You can talk about some of what is there.

What you see in the noetic and imaginal worlds exist, just as the cup of water on the table does, which is in the sensory world.

You can see the whole universe, but not with your five senses. You can see it with the noetic sense, or the imaginal sense, when "the whole universe" points you to it.

The invalidity of an argument can be a solid and certain thing. Its solidity is like the solidity of a rock.

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You see what you see around you, and philosophy can reveal to you that you see different things, have seen different things all along. The cup on the table means something to you -- it was given to you by someone. The cup is a "cup" and not a "topless hollow cylinder". You don't see the "cup" the same

way as if it were a "shrine" to a household god. The cup is connected to its connotations in the noetic world. What you see and interact with is not just a physical object, but the object as you interpret it.

So you live in your own personal world, as you experience it. You live in a bubble of your own experience, shaped by your preferences. Yet you know that there is a world outside. Your mind directly perceives the whole universe, the way your mind directly perceives the cup and the table.

Your bubble of experience contains things that come from you and you know it. You were the cause of them. It contains many more things that didn't come from you, and you know it.

All the things that affect you in any way do so by being in the bubble that you experience. That which is experienced can affect you, when you experience it.

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People got scurvy and we wondered why. We knew that citrus fruit could help. What was it in the citrus fruit that helped? Scientists figured out exactly what it was, and named it vitamin C. They had to use weird, careful motions. From the way I have heard science is done, I imagine they used weird, careful motions of laboratory work to isolate compounds from citrus fruit, fruit which in our experience are wholes of taste, smell, touch, sight, and sound, to find compounds within which we cannot taste, smell, touch, see, or hear. And similarly I imagine they used the weird, careful motions of splitting a group in two, giving one group a chemical to see if it cured their scurvy, recording the results, and applying statistics to the results.

Now we know that citrus fruit have vitamin C in them, and we look at those fruit differently with what we know. We relate to them differently, as fruit that are not simply pleasant to eat, or useful in specific dishes, but as powerful in saving our lives from a specific threat. We understand citrus fruit

more truly because of what the scientists did. We understand the citrus fruit in our ordinary lives differently because of the weird, careful motions they made.

Made of Conscious Experience; Metaphysical Connector

The scientists of the visible and of the invisible worlds seek to know the nature of reality. What is everything made of? Some say matter or something like it. If you break a rock in pieces, and break the pieces in pieces, they say, when you can't break it anymore you get little things (like tiny rocks?) called subatomic particles. Or perhaps some say if you break everything down you get vibrations, or energies.

But others say that actually all those things are really only the perceptions of them. A granite rock is made out of the fact that it hurts my foot to kick it, out of its salt-and-pepper appearance to my eyes, its rough surface as I feel it, and the sound that it makes if I tap or scrape it (or even what it tastes or smells like), a stream of experiences that comes through the portal that I name "the granite rock". (And its invisible name and meaning, which make it a "granite rock" to me and not merely a "rock", are also made out of the perception of them.) So then everything is perception, or conscious experience.

We know that perceptions, conscious experiences, exist, because we have direct access to them. Is there anything else in reality?

Conscious experience, in itself, can only experience. What is experienced is conscious experience. Conscious experience is only affected by changes in its experience, which are caused by conscious experience. So, if there is non-conscious being, it can't change conscious experience. Whatever is in the world of conscious experience, whatever you have intuited and seen of yourself, and of that which can affect you, cannot be affected by non-conscious being. So, though it might exist, we can never know it, and it can never threaten us.

There are some consequences to this view. Everything that matters is perceived, a perception being perceived. Conscious experiences interact by experiencing each other. You live in the bubble of your experiences. I could perhaps see you walking down the hallway. But I would not see what you see. I see a picture of you, and you might see a picture of me, our eyes seeing each others' faces. Who is it who sees your experience, and my experience, to arrange the picture of me in your bubble, and the picture of you in mine? It is as though there is a Metaphysical Connector or Connectors who glue together all of experience. They know all or part of what they are doing as they glue, because they are conscious of it, conscious beings with wills.

(Situated in my bubble, I exert my will to change it, but my will only goes so far. I can make myself and the Connector experience things through the force of my will, in the space of my bubble that it must experience in order to connect with me. The Connector can make me experience many more things in my bubble through the force of its will. My bubble is part of its experience, one of the bubbles it experiences. The state of my bubble is a negotiation between its will and mine.)

How many Connectors are there? If there is one, then we have a being who could be considered God. It experiences everything and could choose to disconnect any bubble from it (from the Connector). (It knows everything and has ultimate power over everything.)

(I used the word "it", but this would have to be a person. It is conscious of the contents of human minds and thus knows and reflects on human-level personal consciousness. To deal with the experience of personal (human) consciousness requires an understanding of human personality, and this understanding requires that the Connector develop a kind of personhood itself, if it didn't have one already. So instead of "it", in English we must choose between "he", "she", and "they", and each of these pronouns loads our perception of God. Perhaps there is a correct pronoun, revealed by God. Maybe God is more masculine than feminine, or feminine than masculine, or is

revealed to be genderless. Like any real being, God could be a particular way.)

This singular Connector would experience all our experience exactly as we do. Notably, every unbearable pain is exactly as unbearable to it as it is to us. If we must reject unbearable pain (if we have the choice), it must reject it. So why do we feel unbearable pain anymore? Something powerful must keep the Connector holding both it and us to it. Because it suffers to keep us alive, it must value keeping us alive, and there must be some compensating good (from its perspective) for the suffering. We don't know for certain that this value of our aliveness is completely trustworthy, but it is suggestive that it might value us in ourselves. Its track record with us seems to be good enough that we could guess it probably does value us and is overall trustworthy.

The Connector (or Connectors) may find some things to be unbearable that we do not. We do not start out knowing its preferences and boundaries. If we are unbearable to it, we must stop or someday it must let us go.

I have assumed so far that there is only one Metaphysical Connector, but I have not shown why there would only be one. A reader might stop here and say "I see that there is a real possibility of there being only one Connector, who would basically fit the description of God (very knowing, very powerful, and probably trustworthy, basically personal)." But can we go further?

The Speaker

When you see something, you really see it. But someone else can say contradictory things about it. Is it the case that one of you sees the real thing, and the other not?

When you visit a city, you see all of it from a distance, the same as anyone, and then you drive down a fraction of its streets, maybe 5% of them. Another person will drive down other streets. There is still one city, and both of you really did

see it. But you could say different things about it. All things are complex, like cities, and are known different ways by different people.

What being is it that can guide you to the part of the city that you would see? You don't choose all of what you see when you see something, perhaps you never choose all of it. But you prepare yourself by years of drought and thought to be ready to see it, when it appears. When it does appear, you see it like a resounding instrument, or like the colors from a sunlit hillside. But another person was not prepared, and the same thing does not mean the same to them. So how are you guided to the part of the thing's city that is apt for you? As though driven by a chauffeur who knows what parts fit your preparation. And the driving is largely done all in one instant, when the image of the thing is first recognized by you.

Scientists see the world in different ways. When you blow up a balloon and tie it off and let it go, it drifts toward the floor and you can kick it up in the air. Scientists see, with their eyes that see the invisible, that inside the balloon are tiny particles (like small billiard balls?) that fly around so fast that they collide with the latex of the balloon and push the latex to force it to take up space. And that these particles are denser than the room's air (because they are "carbon dioxide", and "carbon dioxide" is heavier than the mixture of gases in the room). And they see all this loaded into the picture of the balloon that falls, which you have to kick back up into the air.

Scientists see a weird world, where invisible particles collide with things. We will say that you only saw the balloon (but you may have learned to see things in a scientific way, yourself). Scientists (of a different sort) can see that the world is made up of bubbles of experience glued together by a Metaphysical Connector or Connectors. But you go through your life, and I go through my life, experiencing it raw and firsthand, without seeing all that. Yet, for me, I see everything through the lens of the scientists of conscious experience, just as I see a balloon through the lens of the other scientists. Yet we take life as a direct and naively knowable thing.

Is a thing a city? Or is it a thing (in this example, just a cup of water), which each of us finds meaningful in different ways (and thus experiences differently)? The science helps us to understand what's going on with the thing, and helps us to understand that other things exist, for which we get our clues from reflecting on our everyday experience. In this case the science says it's a city. But when you see a painting in a museum, you perceive a painting that itself gives you dread. That is your firsthand experience. How can it be both exactly as you see it and much more complex, even contradictory?

You see a part of the city and ascribe its character to the whole. The part of the city you see is the whole city. You see the whole painting. You see only a part of it, the painting as it means dread, the particular dread you have spent years preparing yourself to see without knowing it. And it's accurate, but incomplete, to ascribe dread to it. You see the whole painting like a city in the mist, with certain dreadful parts clear to you.

But the scientists of conscious experience point out that you exist in your bubble of experience. A painting existed in your bubble, and yet that painting was dreadful, which was because of you. The painting in your bubble was exactly as it appeared to you, though it might not completely accurately represent the painting it represents. Some being made it to be the way it was based on you. That being was conscious. The painting was a word it spoke to you, loaded with connotations according to how it would fit you. This painting you saw was connected to the painting in my bubble of experience, when I was at the same museum. I saw the same painting, but different because it meant something different to me. Some conscious being made the painting in my world what it was, to suit me. It was connected to the painting, could see it as is necessary for conscious beings to connect to conscious experiences. It could see me, and knew my history. It created the word of the painting, exactly as it would suit me, and spoke it to me.

I see the resonance of a personal voice in the things that I see.

The voice communicates in a wordless dialogue, and I am in dialogue with it, a wordless prayer. I am prayer, and all of existence is prayer. This is a scientific view, a religious science. I see the everyday differently because of this.

Now are there many ones who speak (Speakers), or just one? Perhaps there are more than one. But there is one who is aware of everything. If I perceive the whole universe, and it as one thing means something to me, who speaks it to me? A being who can see the whole universe, and can choose not to speak it to me if it so decides. The Speaker who speaks the whole universe has the power and sensitivity of God.

Legitimacy

Some people think that morality exists. I agree, thinking "if something does not in any way ought to exist, how can it?" Then everything that does exist, should exist. But some things are horrors that produce dissonance when "played" at the same time as others. These morally dissonant things are unbearable to a morally sensitive person, and if God is morally sensitive, he must reject them someday.

If morality exists, a standard exists, and that standard validates things (perhaps "the standard that validates" simply is morality). If this standard exists, it must be made of consciousness. It is active when it validates. So it is a person. It must be conscious of everything that it validates, because validation requires it to connect to everything it validates, and for conscious beings to connect, they must experience each other. It can cease to validate any given thing, and then that thing ceases to exist. So morality is a person with the power of God. The Speaker and morality are the same because they see all the same things (everything). If they were to be two different persons, they see things exactly the same and their wills combine into one will as they connect to each other and to us. So they would become one being. This being connects to everything and validates everything, is a "universal validator".

When the standard validates something, it values it. There is a particular kind of valuing for different kinds of things. When a person values a person as a person, that could be called "love".

Morality that deserves to be morality is "legitimacy". How can "a standard that validates" itself be valid? We have some clues from our observations of leaders. Leaders who expose themselves to the same risks as they demand of their followers are more legitimate than leaders who do not. God experiences all the pain that we do. But could God be even more legitimate? When he experiences a human life, he does so with the full context of the whole universe. What if he could somehow experience a human life from a limited point of view? Also, morality is the highest standard, and those who truly live up to it are willing to sacrifice everything for that standard. How can God give up everything? He can't stop living.

So what if God became a limited personal being? God as Metaphysical Connector and Speaker can't do that. But what if God as Legitimacy could, if Legitimacy consists of more than one person? One of the persons of Legitimacy could work with the Connector/Speaker/Universal Validator to establish the world that we live in, with its implicit rules and burdens. Then, at some point, this person could live a finite personal life (perhaps a human one) and in his limited perspective be willing to die for morality with no hope of coming back to life, even as an atheist. By doing so, he would validate morality, affirming its legitimacy. The Universal person of God himself risks his own death by putting the Finite person in a position of choosing whether to go through with dying or not. If the Finite person hardens himself against dying, all of reality ceases to exist.

If you're familiar with Christian teachings about God, you will see a resemblance between these two persons of Legitimacy and the Father and Son of Christianity (I use the pronouns "he" for the Universal and Finite persons of Legitimacy out of deference to the possibility that Christianity is true, pointed to by this argument for Legitimacy). Is there an analog to the

Christian Holy Spirit?

Have you ever known someone well, and you became a different person around them? And occasionally you heard them around people other than you, and realized that they were a different person around them than with you? You and they overlap when together, creating two new people (the part of you in response to them, and the part of them in response to you), and if these two people are in-sync enough, they are effectively one person. So when God overlaps his personality with another, if there is enough of an overlap, a third person who is both God and that other person comes into being (the Universal Overlap), and this perhaps is the Holy Spirit. The Overlap is one person because the Universal Person is aware of all of the overlapping that goes on between himself and all other beings, and if all awarenesses are united, it is one being. There is a sense in which it is part of God, and a sense in which it is a separate person.

It may be possible for God to exist by himself, but we find that we don't know ourselves unless there is some other being to show us that we exist, and if we don't know ourselves, there's a sense in which we don't exist. So perhaps the Universal person needs the Finite in order to exist, and the Overlap necessarily exists between them. Then these are the minimal set of persons that must exist at any time in the universe. And then they must have the true intention to bear our burdens and be willing to give up their lives to what is best, at all times, for anything to exist.

Connection to Christianity

So this argument has a momentum that may lead some to Christianity. However, I have not proved the truth of the Bible, or of Christianity. I think that some aspects of belief have to be known through personal experience. We have intellectual conscience, which to some extent is our guide. Not all of reality can be figured out in a public way, binding on everyone. There is always a part which we have to experience

ourselves.

It was my goal, years ago when I set out to discover these arguments, to prove the existence of God, but also to affirm the Christianity that I grew up with. I feel that I am most solidly connected to God and the pursuit of truth, and less solidly to Christianity. But I personally think that it is worthwhile for me to try to obey the Bible, and I do think that these arguments (that is, the one on Legitimacy especially) provide a reason to consider the truth of the religion that has a Father and Son, and the beliefs that that religion connects to its Father and Son.

Naming

Three images of God are given here. The Metaphysical Connector, who knits together all of reality through his consciousness; the Speaker, who speaks the meaning of all things to us; and Legitimacy, the being (the community of beings) who establish law and are worthy enough to establish law. These three can form the term "MSL" as a shorthand to describe the views of this booklet.

The "Metaphysical Connector" is the name I would choose to appeal to Christians, or perhaps Jews or Muslims, but the "Metaphysical Organism" is the name I would choose to appeal to non-Christians in general. The non-Christian may be an atheist who wants to make no assumptions about God. The MO appears to be not even God to them, simply some kind of metaphysical organism. The starting point for an atheist or some spiritual non-Christians is not belief in God, and the first step for them in the process of understanding things is not to believe in God, but rather, perhaps, in a Metaphysical Organism. But the "Connector" name is valid as well.

It may be useful to talk about the arguments given above. In the past, I have used "immaterialism" for the Metaphysical Connector/Organism argument. But this may not be precise enough, because there are other "immaterialist" philosophies. I have used "simantism" to refer to the Speaker argument

("simantism" based on a modern Greek word for meaning), and "legitimism" to refer to the Legitimacy argument. ("Legitimism" is already a political term.) So two out of three names may need to be replaced. In some contexts, one could use the "M argument" or "M-ism", "S argument" or "S-ism", "L argument" or "L-ism". ("According to the S argument in MSL, there is a Speaker who 'speaks' the whole universe to each person.") To refer to all of the arguments in this booklet, one can say "MSL".

Conclusion

I hope that I have shown that God exists, with what I have written.

If you want to read further, you may consider the Bible, or other religious texts that might be from God. You may also be interested in other writing by me, which you can find at 10v24.net.

If you see a problem with this proof, let me know. I will put up "issues" that people send me (or that I think of) on my website (10v24.net/msl). And then when I have time try to address them.

This booklet focuses on trying to prove the existence of God, which could be seen as a philosophical pursuit. But if you think about it, it implies a religion or set of religions. One dimension of religion it promotes is "voluntary millennial holiness" which you can read about in another booklet of mine, called *Voluntary Millennial Holiness*.

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I have given my attempt at saying why people should believe that God exists (offered a "proof of the existence of God"). But this argument or set of arguments is not how I experience things, not exactly.

Whenever a thing is meaningful (conveys something of the deeper world, whether through its truth, beauty, pain, horror, evil, or its mere existence), I hear the voice of God who speaks every word. Only an ultimately deep and true person could

speak to me so persuasively that I hear indisputable reality, the reality that my perceptions are my perceptions, or any other indisputable thing.

This is my natural perception now, something that I learned and that was shown to me by my experiences. The sense of the voice of God is like being able to tell apart a real painting from a forgery, something that for most (or all?) people must be cultivated but which is still real. However, I can conceive that there might be some way that my perception might somehow be wrong, and then I have doubt.

Why do I doubt? The only reason to doubt that has any point to it is to do so because I should. If I should doubt, then there is a standard. What standard validates that standard? If you start with "argument q is invalid because it has fallacy X", then why is fallacy X a problem? If a reason is given for why fallacy X is a problem, why is that reason valid? Everything that validates requires validity itself to be valid, and validity must measure up to a standard.

So there must be a highest standard, which validates everything that should be. If that standard exists then it must connect to conscious experiences, including all of mine, and including the part of me that is a conscious experience. To validate or invalidate requires contact with what it validates. Is it valid that I experience my doubt? The experience of my doubt is validated by a being that experiences it, because what an experience is is experience. And that validation ($v1$) is validated by a higher one ($v2$), which experiences it ($v1$) and all that is in it ($v1$), including its ($v1$'s) experience of my experience of my doubt, and so on all the way up. So the highest standard is conscious and knowing, and is a person, for being aware of personal consciousness firsthand and going on to act based on that.